

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)  
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE (FNS)  
SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAMS DIVISION (SFPD)**

**NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON MATERNAL,  
INFANT AND FETAL NUTRITION  
JULY 21 -23, 2015  
MEETING MINUTES**

The National Advisory Council on Maternal, Infant and Fetal Nutrition (Council) met at the Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Shirlington, Environment Room, 4271 Campbell Avenue, Arlington, Virginia, on July 21-23, 2015. This public meeting, announced in the Federal Register on July 2, 2015, was called to order by Debra R. Whitford, Director, Supplemental Food Programs Division (SFPD), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). The agenda for the meeting is attached.

Council Members in attendance include: Chairperson Melinda Jossefides, Vice Chairperson Ann Kellams, Grace Chang, Steven Foley, Donna Speed, Veronica Gillispie, Kathy Sweidel-Caton, Katurah Bryant, Kathleen Harriss, Terry Bryce, Anthony McGaughey, Christine Dolan, Christopher Bendekgey, Krista Garofalo, Michelle Lawler, Diane Kriviski, and Debra Whitford.

**Tuesday, July 21, 2015**

**Welcome/Opening Remarks/Introductions/Overview of the Meeting**

Ms. Debra Whitford welcomed members and opened the meeting by introducing herself, recognizing Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs Deputy Administrator Diane Kriviski, Council Chairperson Melinda Jossefides and Vice Chairperson Ann Kellams. Council members were asked to introduce themselves and mention their affiliations.

Ms. Kriviski welcomed everyone, thanked the Council members for their service and spoke about the important role of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and other FNS nutrition assistance programs in alleviating food insecurity and improving public health. Ms. Kriviski identified the upcoming reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, which governs the WIC and WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs as an opportunity to examine program operations and effectiveness and consider potential changes to the program. Additionally, Ms. Kriviski awarded Certificates of Appreciation to Council Members whose terms will be ending September 30, 2015. The meeting was then turned over to Ms. Whitford, who introduced Council Chairperson Melinda Jossefides.

Ms. Jossefides advised the Council Members about their roles on the Council and reviewed the meeting agenda.

## **WIC Program Updates**

Debra Whitford provided an update for the *Actions Taken* on the 2014 Council recommendations for both WIC and CSFP. Ms. Whitford informed the Council that over the next two days they would receive detailed updates addressing WIC Funding, Policy, Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), Program Integrity, Nutrition Services, and Research as well as CSFP during the meeting. Ms. Whitford presented highlights from the October 22, 2014, event celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WIC and shared the video created for the event.

Ms. Whitford addressed WIC's role in supporting the USDA Strategic Plan goals. WIC continues to contribute to the broader USDA goals by focusing on increasing the numbers of infants breastfed, preserving the public trust through Program Integrity efforts and reducing food insecurity by expanding efforts to improve the retention of child participants in WIC.

## **WIC Funding**

Mr. Hayes Brown, Chief, SFPD Funding, Reporting & Analysis Branch provided an update on WIC funding. Mr. Brown explained the WIC funding process beginning with what happens once WIC receives an appropriation from Congress.

Mr. Brown further discussed the funding formulas used for providing State agencies with both Food funds and Nutrition Services and Administration funds. Mr. Brown announced that the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Appropriation is \$ 6,623,000,000. Mr. Brown highlighted the average monthly participation rates for FY 2014 (8,258,476) and FY 2015 (8,075,824 for October-March) and participation trends. Mr. Brown reviewed the President's FY 2016 WIC Budget Request and FY 2016 House and Senate appropriation bills for WIC funding.

## **National Studies and Initiatives Updates**

Ms. Maggie Applebaum, Special Nutrition Analysis Branch Chief, FNS Office of Policy Support provided an overview of FNS Program evaluations, and stated that sound scientific research supports policy decisions about program design, including outreach, program integrity, nutrition education, and the food packages.

Ms. Karen Castellanos-Brown, Special Nutrition Evaluation Branch, FNS Office of Policy Support provided background on results from the WIC Breastfeeding Policy Inventory Part 1 Report: Breastfeeding Policy and Practices, and Part II Report: Breastfeeding Measures.

**Wednesday, July 22, 2015**

## **WIC Policy Updates**

Ms. Marta Kealey, Nutritionist, SFPD Policy Branch provided an update on: Upcoming Policy Guidance; 2015 Special Project Grants; Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs; Nutrition Risk Revisions; Child Retention; Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA); and State Plan process. The upcoming Policy Guidance includes: Sharing Data with Census; Certification Handbook; Verification of Certification; and Separation of Duties.

### **Program Integrity Update**

Ms. Stacey Sheffey, Senior Program Analyst, SFPD Program Integrity and Monitoring Branch explained the background, overview, and efforts underway on WIC Program Integrity.

Ms. Sheffey discussed the two studies underway to review and analyze WIC vendor management practices: *Indicators of High Risk WIC Vendors Study* and *WIC Vendor Risk Reduction Study*.

### **Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)**

Ms. Erica Antonson, Program Analyst, FNS Food Distribution Division provided an update on CSFP. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, designated \$2.8 million for the addition of States with approved State plans but not yet participating in CSFP to join the program. Seven new States (Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts and Rhode Island) joined the CSFP for the first time in 2015. CSFP now operates in 46 States, 2 Indian Tribal Organizations, and the District of Columbia.

Ms. Antonson provided a funding and participation update. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, provided \$211.482 million for CSFP for FY 2015. The 2015 CSFP national caseload is 604,000 and the administrative grant per caseload slot is \$73.78. The FY16 Budget Request and House/Senate Committee appropriation bills include \$221.298 million to support a 10,000 slot caseload increase for 2016.

### **Nutrition Services Update**

Ms. Anne Bartholomew, Chief, SFPD Nutrition Services Branch provided an update on nutrition service activities. Ms. Bartholomew gave updates on the final food package rule and the currently ongoing Institute of Medicine review. Ms. Bartholomew also discussed USDA's national breastfeeding promotion program, *Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work*, and current efforts to update and revitalize the campaign.

Ms. Bartholomew shared newly published WIC participant publications, "*Next Steps to Health for You and Your Family*" and "*Give your Baby a Healthy Start*".

### **WIC EBT Branch Update**

Ms. Jerilyn Malliet, Chief, WIC EBT Branch provided an update on WIC EBT and technology and progress in meeting the Congressional mandate of statewide WIC EBT by October 2020.

Ms. Malliet discussed the 2015 funding available for technology projects and shared the National EBT status, which included as of July, 2015: 14 State agencies have statewide EBT; 34 State agencies are in implementation stage (2 States expected to launch Statewide later this year); 36 State agencies in various stages of planning for EBT; and 6 State agencies without EBT activity.

Ms. Malliet provided an update on the National Universal Product Code Database that was launched on May 15, 2015, for State agency use. The database contains a total of 26,439 items and will continue to add products as more States launch EBT.

**Thursday, July 23, 2015**

**Elections for Vice Chairperson**

The Council elected Christopher Bendekgey as the Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Bendekgey will assume these duties at the 2016 Council meeting.

**Logistics & Wrap-up**

Ms. Whitford thanked the Council for a very productive meeting.

The Council discussed their draft recommendations.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Whitford and Ms. Jossefides adjourned the meeting.